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Mayor Anthony A. Williams Written Remarks at Baseball Kick-Off Block Party

(Washington, DC) We're here today for one reason. We're here today to say that we want the national pastime in our nation's capital. We're here today to help bring Major League Baseball back to Washington, D.C.

Imagine for a moment: It's been a long, long day. You can't eat because the phone keeps ringing. You can't answer email because the meetings keep coming. And there's a line five people deep to meet with you.

You deserve a break. So you walk down the street, grab a hot dog, buy a cap and – on a gleaming summer day with thousands of people like you – watch Major League Baseball in Washington, D.C.

There's a lot of talk about baseball—and a lot of discussion about why it's so important. Let me tell you what I think:

Like the new convention center and the redevelopment of the former one, baseball is a major economic engine that can revitalize our neighborhoods—and one of the many things we're doing to grow our city.

Baseball can create nearly 4,000 new jobs—along with retail, restaurants and housing. A new ballpark and team will produce over \$1.1 billion in benefits over 30 years. That means more tax revenue for city programs, like schools, streets and social services.

Don't let anyone tell you different: Baseball is about improving our neighborhoods. Your tax dollars won't be used for a ballpark. Instead, the ballpark will generate tax dollars for services that residents need and demand.

But just as much, baseball is about civic pride. Think about walking past the U.S. Capitol, arriving at a brand-new stadium, and watching your home team play with our national monuments in the background.

It's one thing to watch the 7th inning on television. But few events rally a community and create shared memories like Opening Day or Game Seven.

To make this happen, we need your support! We need you to wear those caps, T-shirts and stickers. We need you to contact your Councilmembers and tell them to cast a vote for MLB in DC. We also need you to show your support at the Baseball Council Hearing on Thursday, June 12th from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Wilson Building.

When I took office, I promised to bring economic development to every corner of this city: We've got \$27 billion worth of development going on. We've got 30,000 units of housing that are either completed, under construction or in the pipeline. We opened our new convention center and we're redeveloping the former one. We're kicking off the "city living, dc style!" campaign this Wednesday at 5:00 pm in Farragut Square. And today, as part of our economic development efforts, we're working to return Major League Baseball to Washington DC.

Baseball is good for our city. It's good for our communities. It will support schools, streets and social services. And it will generate civic pride.

It's time to return the national pastime to the nation's capital. Let's bring baseball back to Washington, DC. Thank you!

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